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### Psalm 105

Labuschagne, C.J.

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# Psalm 105— Logotechnical Analysis

## Guidelines

- Please read the [General Introduction](#) as well as the Introduction to [Book I](#) and [Book IV](#).
- For common features found in the numerical analysis charts, see the [Key to the charts](#).

## Specific features of Psalm 105

- Psalm 105 is a sister psalm of Psalms 106 and 107. In terms of content and form, they share the feature of being episodic poems structured by well-defined episodes from Israel's history. Compare the "Specific features" of [Psalms 106](#) and [107](#).
- The *pièce de résistance* of Psalm 105 is its central section, **vs. 7-38** (Cantos II and III in my division of the text) with the Egypt passage, vs. 23-38, at the centre. This inner core is spanned by the land promise given to the patriarchs - from the time of Abraham through that of Joseph -, vs. 7-22, and the passage dealing with its fulfilment (vs. 39-44). The three passages are skilfully demarcated by a sophisticated use of the keyword 'land'.
- The latter passage, vs. 39-44, is provided with an *afterthought* (v. 45a-b): a *coda*, as in Psalms 104 and 106-109 and in many other psalms. Excluding the coda, we find **40** words in the *concluding passage*, vs. 39-44, which corresponds with the **40-word opening passage**, vs. 1-6. They are devised to envelop the central section, **vs. 7-38**.
- In line with all psalms in Book III and practically all in Book IV, Psalm 105 has a meaningful centre that is determined by the poetic building blocks: the bicolic verseline, v. 23, at the very beginning of the Egypt passage.

## Strophic structure - Canto/Stanza boundary: || Canticle boundary: |

- Van der Lugt: 1-3, 4-6 || 7-9, 10-12, 13-15 | 16, 17-19, 20-22, 23-25 || 26-27, 28-30, 31-33, 34-36, 37-39, 40-42, 43-45 (3 cantos - of which the middle canto has 2 canticles - 16 strophes, 45 verselines and 90 cola).
- Fokkelman: 1-3, 4-6 || 7-9, 10-11 || 12-13, 14-15 || 16-17, 18-19, 20-22 || 23-25, 26-27 || 28-29, 30-31, 32-33 || 34-35, 36-38 || 39-41, 42-43, 44-45 (8 stanzas, 19 strophes, 45 verselines and 90 cola).
- Labuschagne: 1-3, 4-6 || 7-9, 10-11 | 12-13, 14-15 | 16-17, 18-19, 20-22 || 23-25, 26-27 | 28-29, 30-31, 32-33 | 34-35, 36-38 || 39-41, 42-43, 44-45 (4 cantos - of which the two middle cantos divide into canticles - 19 strophes, 45 verselines and 90 cola).

## Logotechnical analysis

- Columns **a** and **b** show the number of words before and after the atnach.
- Column **c**: words in the central section; **d**: words in the framework (1-6 and 39-45).
- The numbering of the 45 verselines coincides with the Masoretic verses.

		Total	a	b	c	d
1	הוֹדוּ לַיהוָה קִרְאוּ בְּשִׁמּוֹ	4	4			4
	הוֹדִיעוּ בְּעַמִּים עֲלִילוֹתָיו:	3		3		3
	Total, v. 1	7	= 4	+ 3	= 0	+ 7
2	שִׁירוּ לֹו זִמְרוּ לֹו	4	4			4
	שִׁיחוּ בְּכָל־נִפְלְאוֹתָיו:	3		3		3
	Total, v. 2	7	= 4	+ 3	= 0	+ 7
3	הִתְהַלְלוּ בְּשֵׁם קְדֹשׁוֹ	3	3			3
	יִשְׁמַח לֵב מִבְּקִשֵּׁי יְהוָה:	4		4		4
	Total, v. 3	7	= 3	+ 4	= 0	+ 7
	Strophe 1 Total, v. 1-3	21	= 11	+ 10	= 0	+ 21

4	דִּרְשׁוּ יְהוָה וְעִזְזוּ <sup>א</sup> בְּקִשְׁוֹ פָּנָיו תִּמְדוּ: Total, v. 4	3      3 3      3 6 = 3 + 3 = 0 + 6
5	זָכְרוּ נִפְלְאוֹתָיו אֲשֶׁר-עָשָׂה <sup>א</sup> מִפְתִּיו וּמִשְׁפָּטֵי-פִיו: Total, v. 5 Total, v. 1-5	4      4 3      3 7 = 4 + 3 = 0 + 7 34 = 18 + 16 = 0 + 34
6	זָרַע אֲבָרְהָם עֲבָדָיו <sup>א</sup> בְּנֵי יַעֲקֹב בְּחִירָיו: Total, v. 6 Strophe 2      Total, v. 4-6 Total, v. 3-6 Canto I      Total, v. 1-6	3      3 3      3 6 = 3 + 3 = 0 + 6 19 = 10 + 9 = 0 + 19 26 = 13 + 13 = 0 + 26 40 = 21 + 19 = 0 + 40
7	הוּא יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ <sup>א</sup> בְּכָל-הָאָרֶץ מִשְׁפָּטָיו: 1 Total, v. 7	3      3      3 3      3      3 6 = 3 + 3 = 6 + 0
8	זָכַר לְעוֹלָם בְּרִיתָו <sup>א</sup> דִּבֶּר צִוְה לְאַלְף דּוֹר: Total, v. 8 Total, v. 5-8	3      3      3 4      4      4 7 = 3 + 4 = 7 + 0 26 = 13 + 13 = 13 + 13
9	אֲשֶׁר כָּרַת אֶת-אֲבָרְהָם <sup>א</sup> וּשְׁבֹעַתּוֹ לְיִשְׁחָק: Total, v. 9 Strophe 3      Total, v. 7-9 Total, v. 5-9	4      4      4 2      2      2 6 = 4 + 2 = 6 + 0 19 = 10 + 9 = 19 + 0 32 = 17 + 15 = 19 + 13
10	וַיַּעֲמִידָהּ לְיַעֲקֹב לְחֶקֶן <sup>א</sup> לְיִשְׂרָאֵל בְּרִית עוֹלָם: Total, v. 10 Total, v. 3-10 Total, v. 1-10	3      3      3 3      3      3 6 = 3 + 3 = 6 + 0 51 = 26 + 25 = 11 + 40 65 + 34 + 31 = 25 + 40
11	לְאֹמֶר לֵךְ אֶתָּן אֶת-אֶרֶץ כְּנַעַן <sup>א</sup> 2 חֲבֹל נַחֲלָתְכֶם: Total, v. 11 Strophe 4      Total, v. 10-11 Canticle II.1      Total, v. 7-11 Total, v. 6-11 Total, v. 1-11	1      1      1 5      5      5 2      2      2 8 = 6 + 2 = 8 + 0 14 = 9 + 5 = 14 + 0 33 = 19 + 14 = 33 + 0 39 = 22 + 17 = 33 + 6 73 = 40 + 33 = 33 + 40
12	בְּהִיוֹתָם מִתֵּי מִסְפָּר <sup>א</sup> כְּמַעֲט וְנִגְרִים בָּהּ: Total, v. 12 Total, v. 9-12	3      3      3 3      3      3 6 = 3 + 3 = 6 + 0 26 = 16 + 10 = 26 + 0
13	וַיִּתְּחֶלְכוּ מִגּוֹי אֶל-גּוֹי <sup>א</sup> מִמַּמְלָכָה אֶל-עַם אֲחֵר: Total, v. 13 Strophe 5      Total, v. 12-13 Total, v. 9-13	4      4      4 4      4      4 8 = 4 + 4 = 8 + 0 14 = 7 + 7 = 14 + 0 34 = 20 + 14 = 34 + 0

14	לֹא־הִנִּיחַ אָדָם לְעִשְׁקָם־ וַיּוֹכַח עֲלֵיהֶם מַלְכִּים־ Total, v. 14 Total, v. 11-14	4 4 4 3 3 3 7 = 4 + 3 = 7 + 0 29 = 17 + 12 = 29 + 0
15	אֶל־תִּגְעוּ בְּמִשְׁחֵי־ וְלִנְבִיאֵי אֶל־תִּרְעוּ־ Total, v. 15 Strophe 6 Total, v. 14-15 Total, v. 13-15 Canticle II.2 Total, v. 12-15 Total, v. 1-15	3 3 3 3 3 3 6 = 3 + 3 = 6 + 0 13 = 7 + 6 = 13 + 0 21 = 11 + 10 = 21 + 0 27 = 14 + 13 = 27 + 0 100 = 54 + 46 = 60 + 40
16	וַיִּקְרָא רָעַב עַל־הָאָרֶץ־ <sup>3</sup> כָּל־מִטְהַ־לֶּחֶם שָׁבַר־ Total, v. 16 Total, v. 12-16	4 4 4 4 4 4 8 = 4 + 4 = 8 + 0 35 = 18 + 17 = 35 + 0
17	שָׁלַח לְפָנֵיהֶם אִישׁ־ לְעֹבֵד נִמְכָּר יוֹסֵף־ Total, v. 17 Strophe 7 Total, v. 16-17 Total, v. 13-17	3 3 3 3 3 3 6 = 3 + 3 = 6 + 0 14 = 7 + 7 = 14 + 0 35 = 18 + 17 = 35 + 0
18	עָנּוּ בְּכָבֵל רַגְלֹו־ בְּרֹזֶל בָּאָה נִפְשׁו־ Total, v. 18 Total, v. 15-18	3 3 3 3 3 3 6 = 3 + 3 = 6 + 0 26 = 13 + 13 = 26 + 0
19	עֲרֵי־עַת בְּאֶדְכָּרוֹ־ אָמַרְתָּ יְהוָה צָרְפָתָהּ־ Total, v. 19 Strophe 8 Total, v. 18-19 Total, v. 15-19	4 4 4 3 3 3 7 = 4 + 3 = 7 + 0 13 = 7 + 6 = 13 + 0 33 = 17 + 16 = 33 + 0
20	שָׁלַח מֶלֶךְ וַיִּתִּירָהּ־ מִשָּׁל עַמִּים וַיַּפְתָּחָהּ־ Total, v. 20 Total, v. 16-20	3 3 3 3 3 3 6 = 3 + 3 = 6 + 0 33 = 17 + 16 = 33 + 0
21	שָׁמוּ אָדוֹן לְבֵיתוֹ־ וּמִשָּׁל בְּכָל־קִנְיָנוֹ־ Total, v. 21	3 3 3 3 3 3 6 = 3 + 3 = 6 + 0
22	לְאַסֹּר שָׁרָיו בְּנִפְשׁוֹ־ וַיִּקְנִי יַחֲבָם־ Total, v. 22 Strophe 9 Total, v. 20-22 Canticle II.3 Total, v. 16-22 Canticle II.2-3 Total, v. 12-22 Canto II Total, v. 7-22 Canto I-II Total, v. 1-22	3 3 3 2 2 2 5 = 3 + 2 = 5 + 0 17 = 9 + 8 = 17 + 0 44 = 23 + 21 = 44 + 0 71 = 37 + 34 = 71 + 0 104 = 56 + 48 = 104 + 0 144 = 77 + 67 = 104 + 40

23 Mid. words: 145+<sup>2</sup>+145 **וַיִּבֹא יִשְׂרָאֵל מִצִּירִים** <sup>א</sup>

Mid. cola: 44+2+44 **וַיִּשְׁקֹב נָר בְּאֶרֶץ חָם** <sup>4</sup>

Middle verseline: 22 + 1 + 22 Total, v. 23

Total, v. 16-23

24 וַיִּפֹּר אֶת־עֲמֹוּ מֵאֲדָם

וַיַּעֲצֶמְהוּ מִצָּרָיו:

Total, v. 24

Total, v. 19-24

25 הָפִיךְ לָפָם לְשֵׁנָא עֲמֹוֹ

לְהַתְנַכֵּל בְּעִבְרָיו:

Total, v. 25

**Strophe 10 Total, v. 23-25**

Total, v. 21-25

Total, v. 16-25

26 שָׁלַח מֹשֶׁה עֲבָדָיו

אֶהְרֹן אֲשֶׁר בְּחֹר־בּוֹ:

Total, v. 26

Total, v. 23-26

27 שְׁמוֹנ־בָּם דְּבָרֵי אֹתוֹתָיו

וּמִפְתִּים **בְּאֶרֶץ** חָם <sup>5</sup>:

Total, v. 27

**Strophe 11 Total, v. 26-27**

Total, v. 24-27

**Canticle III.1 Total, v. 23-27**

28 שָׁלַח חֲשָׁךְ וַיַּחֲשֹׁךְ

וְלֹא־מָרוּ אֶת־דְּבָרוֹ:

Total, v. 28

Total, v. 19-28

29 הָפִיךְ אֶת־מִימֵיהֶם לְדָם

וַיָּמָת אֶת־דִּגְתָּם:

Total, v. 29

**Strophe 12 Total, v. 28-29**

Total, v. 25-29

30 שָׁרַץ **אַרְצֵם** צָפַרְדְּעִים <sup>6</sup>

בְּחֹדְרֵי מְלִכֵיהֶם:

Total, v. 30

Total, v. 27-30

31 אָמַר וַיִּבֹּא עֲרֹבָה

בָּנִים בְּכָל־גְּבוּלָם:

Total, v. 31

**Strophe 13 Total, v. 30-31**

Total, v. 27-31

3 3 3

4 4 4

7 = 3 + 4 = 7 + 0

51 = 26 + 25 = 51 + 0

4 4 4

2 2 2

6 = 4 + 2 = 6 + 0

37 = 20 + 17 = 37 + 0

4 4 4

2 2 2

6 = 4 + 2 = 6 + 0

19 = 11 + 8 = 19 + 0

30 = 17 + 13 = 30 + 0

63 = 34 + 29 = 63 + 0

3 3 3

4 4 4

7 = 3 + 4 = 7 + 0

26 = 14 + 12 = 26 + 0

4 4 4

3 3 3

7 = 4 + 3 = 7 + 0

14 = 7 + 7 = 14 + 0

26 = 15 + 11 = 26 + 0

33 = 18 + 15 = 7 + 0

3 3 3

4 4 4

7 = 3 + 4 = 7 + 0

64 = 34 + 30 = 64 + 0

4 4 4

3 3 3

7 = 4 + 3 = 7 + 0

14 = 7 + 7 = 14 + 0

34 = 18 + 16 = 34 + 0

3 3 3

2 2 2

5 = 3 + 2 = 5 + 0

26 = 14 + 12 = 26 + 0

3 3 3

3 3 3

6 = 3 + 3 = 6 + 0

11 = 6 + 5 = 11 + 0

32 = 17 + 15 = 32 + 0

32	נתן גְּשִׁמִּיהֶם בְּרָדָּה 7 אֵשׁ לְהַבּוֹת בְּאַרְצָם: Total, v. 32 Total, v. 30-32	3 3 3 3 3 3 6 = 3 + 3 = 6 + 0 17 = 9 + 8 = 17 + 0
33	וַיֵּךְ גִּפְנִים וּתְאֵנֹתָם וַיִּשְׁפֹּר עֵץ גְּבוּלָם: Total, v. 33 Strophe 14 Total, v. 32-33 Canticle III.2 Total, v. 28-33	3 3 3 3 3 3 6 = 3 + 3 = 6 + 0 12 = 6 + 6 = 12 + 0 37 = 19 + 18 = 38 + 0
34	אָמַר וַיָּבֹא אֶרְבֶּהָ וַיִּלֶּק וְאִין מִסָּפָר: Total, v. 34 Total, v. 29-34	3 3 3 3 3 3 6 = 3 + 3 = 6 + 0 36 = 19 + 17 = 36 + 0
35	8 וַיֹּאכַל כָּל-עֵשֶׂב בְּאַרְצָם וַיֹּאכַל פְּרִי אֲדָמָתָם: Total, v. 35 Strophe 15 Total, v. 34-35	4 4 4 3 3 3 7 = 4 + 3 = 7 + 0 13 = 7 + 6 = 13 + 0
36	9 וַיֵּךְ כָּל-בְּכוֹר בְּאַרְצָם רֹאשִׁית לְכָל-אוֹנִים: Total, v. 36 Total, v. 34-36 Total, v. 33-36	4 4 4 3 3 3 7 = 4 + 3 = 7 + 0 20 = 11 + 9 = 20 + 0 26 = 14 + 12 = 26 + 0
37	וַיִּזְצִיאוּ בְּכֶסֶף וְזָהָב וְאִין בְּשִׁבְטָיו כּוֹשֵׁל: Total, v. 37 Total, v. 34-37	3 3 3 3 3 3 6 = 3 + 3 = 6 + 0 26 = 14 + 12 = 26 + 0
38	שִׁמַּח מִצָּרִים בְּצֹאתָם כִּי-נָפַל פְּתָדָם עֲלֵיהֶם: Total, v. 38 Strophe 16 Total, v. 36-38 Canticle III.3 Total, v. 34-38 Canto III Total, v. 23-38 Central section Total, v. 7-38	3 3 3 4 4 4 7 = 3 + 4 = 7 + 0 20 = 10 + 10 = 20 + 0 33 = 17 + 16 = 33 + 0 103 = 54 + 49 = 103 + 0 70 = 36 + 34 = 70 + 0 207 = 110 + 97 = 207 + 0
39	פָּרַשׁ עֲנַן לְמִסְדָּה וְאֵשׁ לְהָאִיר לַיְלָה: Total, v. 39 Total, v. 36-39 Total, v. 23-39	3 3 3 3 3 3 6 = 3 + 3 = 0 + 6 26 = 13 + 13 = 20 + 6 109 = 57 + 52 = 103 + 6
40	שָׁאֵל וַיָּבֹא שְׁלוֹה וְלֶחֶם שָׁמַיִם יִשְׁבִּיעֵם: Total, v. 40	3 3 3 3 3 3 6 = 3 + 3 = 0 + 6
41	פָּתַח צוּר וַיַּזְוִבוּ מַיִם הִלְכוּ בְּצִיּוֹת נָהָר: Total, v. 41 Strophe 17 Total, v. 39-41 Total, v. 38-41	4 4 4 3 3 3 7 = 4 + 3 = 0 + 7 19 = 10 + 9 = 0 + 19 26 = 13 + 13 = 7 + 19

42		כִּי־זָכַר אֶת־דִּבְרֵי קִדְשׁוֹ אֶת־אֲבֹתָהֶם עֲבָדָיו: Total, v. 42 Total, v. 40-42 Total, v. 38-42	5      5 3              3 8 = 5 + 3 = 0 + 8 21 = 12 + 9 = 0 + 21 34 = 18 + 16 = 7 + 27	5 3 8 21 34
43		וַיּוֹצֵא עַמּוֹ בְּשִׁשּׁוֹן בָּרָנָה אֶת־בְּחִירָיו: Total, v. 43 Strophe 18      Total, v. 42-43	3      3 3              3 6 = 3 + 3 = 0 + 6 14 = 8 + 6 = 0 + 14	3 3 6 14
44		וַיִּתֵּן לָהֶם אֶרְצוֹת גִּזְרִים 10 וַעֲמַל לְאֻמִּים יִירָשׁוּ: Total, v. 44 Total, v. 40-44 Total, v. 39-44 Total, v. 1-44	4      4 3              3 7 = 4 + 3 = 0 + 7 34 = 19 + 15 = 0 + 34 40 = 22 + 18 = 0 + 40 287 = 153 + 134 = 207 + 80	4 3 7 34 40 80
45a-b	Coda	בְּעִבּוֹר יִשְׁמְרוּ חֻקֵּי וְתוֹרָתוֹ יִנְצְרוּ Total, v. 45a-b Strophe 19      Total, v. 44-45b Total, v. 42-45b Canto IV      Total, v. 39-45b Total, v. 22-45b Total, v. 1-45b	3      3 2              2 5 = 5 + 0 = 0 + 5 12 = 9 + 3 = 0 + 12 26 = 17 + 9 = 0 + 26 45 = 27 + 18 = 0 + 45 141 = 78 + 63 = 96 + 45 292 = 158 + 134 = 207 + 85	3 2 5 12 26 45 45 85
45c		הַלְלוּ־יָהּ: Total, including הַלְלוּ־יָהּ	2 = 2 + 0 = 0 + 2 294 = 160 + 134 = 207 + 87	2 87

## Observations

1. The two words at the end, הַלְלוּ־יָהּ, 'Praise Yah!', stand outside the poetic body of the psalm. See Observation 1 in my Analysis of [Psalm 104](#).
2. On word level, the two words, יִשְׂרָאֵל מִצְרַיִם, 'Israel to Egypt', in v. 23a, constitute the arithmetic centre (292 = 145 + 2 + 145). They fall within the middle verseline, v. 23 (45 = 22 + 1 + 22), coinciding with the two middle cola (90 = 44 + 2 + 44):

יִבֹּא יִשְׂרָאֵל מִצְרַיִם ^ וַיַּעֲקֹב נָר בְּאֶרֶץ־חָם:

Israel came to Egypt // Jacob sojourned in the land of Ham.

It is with these 7 words that the well-defined Egypt passage (vs. 23-38) opens. The keyword 'Egypt', which features only in vs. 23a and 38a, clearly demarcates this section of the psalm and emphasizes the compositional unity of the passage. This is underscored by the fact that it deals with the period explicitly defined as from the time Israel 'came to Egypt' (v. 23) to the time they 'departed from Egypt' (v. 38).

Seeing the paramount importance of the Egypt experience, not only in the present psalm, but also in the next, and in general in Israel's historiography, the arithmetic centre can with certainty be identified as the deliberately designed meaningful centre.

3. In terms of the arithmetic centre on verseline- and colon level, the framework of the psalm, which is both lucid and regular, can be outlined as follows:

vs. 1-22	22 verselines	44 cola	144 words
v. 23	1 verseline	2 cola	7 words
vs. 24-45b	22 verselines	44 cola	141 words.

In terms of words, we may note that the addition of the 2-word musical postlude does not 'perfect' the arithmetic centre on word level, but it nearly does:  $294 = 144 + 7 + 143$ . This proves that the postlude was not added to 'improve' the poem's numerical structure – another reason for excluding it from the word-count.

4. Taking the Egypt passage as a close-knit unit, preceded by a numerically well-defined section (vs. 7-22), having **104** ( $4 \times 17$ ) words, I divide the psalm into the following cantos:

vs. 1-6 , Canto I      The call to invoke YHWH and recall his great deeds  
 vs. 7-22, Canto II      From the *land-covenant* with Abraham to the time of Joseph  
 vs. 23-38, Canto III    YHWH's wonderful deeds in Egypt  
 vs. 39-45, Canto IV    Remembering his *covenant*, he led Israel to the promised *land*.  
 My canto division is primarily determined by the major caesurae in the psalm, between verses **6 || 7** and **22 || 23** and **38 || 39**.

Having accomplished my analysis, I read a precis of Dick Clifford's presentation to the CBA conference in Minnesota (August 2005), of which Duane Christensen kindly had sent me a copy. Clifford recognized these major coherent passages and proposed a division of the text, which is very similar to mine.

The menorah presented by Christensen (1-7, 8-13, 14-19, 20-26, 27-32, 33-38, and 39-45), which is "determined primarily on prosodic grounds", ignores these obvious breaks in the text (except that between vs. 38 and 39). The text appears to have been split up in this way to achieve the desired menorah, wreaking havoc on the material content and thought flow.

I cannot evade the conclusion that the biblical authors cannot possibly have intended such mechanically contrived menorahs as this one and the "3-level nested menorah pattern". They are inventions and therefore totally invalid. My criticism also applies to many of the other menorahs to be found in Christensen's analyses.

To be genuine, a menorah pattern has to comply with strict requirements, in my judgement, in much the same way as a meaningful centre. The primary requisite is that the pattern should not disregard the inherent caesurae in the text, neither should it put asunder what belongs together in terms of form and thought content.

If these prerequisites are set aside, as is mostly the case in Christensen's logoprosodic approach, the question arises whether his method is at all helpful in identifying the structure of a text. An even more crucial question is: can logotechnique and prosodics really be combined to form a 'logoprosodic' approach? The prosodic approach ought to prove its worth independently. If it fails to do so, being unable to stand on its own, it should by no means be integrated into logotechnical analysis. See also the critical remarks in the rubric "Strophic structure" in my Analysis of Psalm 90.

The division of the text I propose, is underscored by the following observation: the 207 words of the central section, **vs. 7-38**, are enveloped by the 40-word introductory call to remember YHWH's great deeds (vs. 1-6), and the 40-word conclusion, culminating in the fulfilment of the land promise, vs. 39-44. The core significantly divides into **104** ( $4 \times 26$ ) words in the prelude to the Egypt passage, vs. 7-22, and **103** words in the Egypt passage itself. I consider this an endeavour on the part of the author to achieve a perfect balance, but for some reason he did not succeed.

vs. 1-6	<b>40</b> words in total
vs. 7-22	<b>104</b> words in total
vs. 23-38	103 words in total
vs. 39-44	<b>40</b> words in total.

To my mind, there is no doubt that the **40 + 40** words in the framework (Column d) have deliberately been designed to symbolically recall the **40** years of Israel's sojourn in the desert, the three periods of 40 years in the life of Moses and his stay of 40 days and 40 nights on the mountain to obtain the law.



5. Before exploring the larger structure of the poem, let me first describe the special structure of Canto IV (vs. 39-45b). In terms of material content, a certain section of the text, vs. 40-44, deal with the fulfilling of the land promise, which is explicitly referred to in v. 44. In this respect, v. 44 marks the end of the entire section dealing with the land promise (vs. 7-44). In addition to vs. 39-44 having exactly 40 words, there are two other logotechnical features underscoring the coherence of vs. 39-44:
- the use of the significant formula **34 = 19 + 15** in vs. 40-44 - see Observation 6,
  - the inner coherence of vs. 39-44, which is reinforced by the **7** acts of YHWH:

he spread a cloud (39a)  
 he brought quails (40a)  
 he satisfied them with bread (40b)  
 he opened the rock (41a)  
 he remembered his promise (42a)  
 he led out his people (43a)  
 he gave them the lands of the nations (44a).\*

- the coherence of the larger passage dealing with **the land**, vs. 7-44, is underscored by the **10** occurrences of the keyword **אֶרֶץ**, 'land': 5x 'land' (vs. 7, 11, 16, 23, 27) and 4x 'their land' (30, 32, 35, 36), and finally 'lands of the nations' (44).

All these factors suggest that v. 45 stands on its own, as a sort of *afterthought*. However, this does not mean that it should be regarded as a later addition. It is integral to the poem and has a pedagogic aim: to articulate the ultimate purpose of the call in vs. 1-5 to remember YHWH's great deeds, namely, *to keep his laws*.

At first I considered the *afterthought* as an *appendix* to the concluding canto, but I came to realize that it stands out *inside* the last canto as a device for conclusion.

Psalm 105 shares the use of an *afterthought* particularly with Psalms 106-109, but with many other psalms in the Psalter as well. I call it a *coda*, which is both a musical and literary term, and most fitting for the present purpose.

For a discussion in more detail, see the [General Introduction](#), under "The use of a coda as a device for conclusion".

6. In Canto IV (vs. 39-45b), a particular section of the text, vs. 40-44, has another intriguing feature, which it has in common with 5 other Psalms: 77:8-12, 81:9-12, 95:8-11, 106:23-27, 107:23-26+40, and with four cognate texts in Deuteronomy: 1:35-36, 38-39, and 7:5-6 and 25-26. It concerns the use of the exclusive compositional formula **34 = 19 + 15**. As I have explained in my Analysis of [Psalm 95](#) (Observation 3), the formula relates to the idea of the loss of the promised land through apostasy. The fact that the formula features explicitly in vs. 40-44, speaks volumes for what the author intended: to prelude on the theme of Ps. 106:23-27 dealing specifically with the loss of the land!
7. A closer examination of Canto II (vs. 7-22), the prelude to the Egypt passage, with its **104** (4 x **26**) words, reveals that it divides into three canticles determined primarily by thought content and the skilful use of the keyword 'land':

II.1 (7-11) the <b>land</b> covenant with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob	33 w.
II.2 (12-15) YHWH's care and protection for the landless sojourners	27 w.
II.3 (16-22) Joseph's crucial role in Egypt during the famine in the <b>land</b>	44 w.

Canticle II.1, the land covenant passage, is clearly demarcated by the keyword 'land': 'the entire land' in v. 7b, and 'the land of Canaan' in v. 11a.

In Canticle II.2, the sojourn passage, there is no mention of land, which should be interpreted as subtly indicating the *landless state* of the wanderers.

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\* The use of series of **7** elsewhere, notably in Ps. 104:2-5, but also in Ps. 91:14-16, Ps. 101:2-5, and Psalm 103, shows that this is not simply a matter of chance. Also note that exactly **17** deeds of YHWH are mentioned in Canto III, which is no coincidence either.

Canto II.3 opens with an explicit – and the only - reference to land (v. 16a). The keyword reappears only in the first verseline of the Egypt passage (v. 23b).

Whether the **77** words in Canticles II.1 and II.3 were chosen intentionally, is difficult to tell. However, if it is not simply a matter of chance, **77** (the product of the number of fullness and fulfilment, 7 x 11), may symbolically refer to the fulfilment of the land promise in Canto IV. The deliberate use of **7** is confirmed by the 7 + 7 + 7 words in the opening verses, the 7 words in the meaningful centre, as well as the 7 acts of YHWH in vs. 39-44 and the 7 words in v. 44.

8. The author has woven the divine name numbers into the text in the following way, at least in so far as they are not determined by chance, which some may indeed be:

vs. 1-5	<b>34</b> (2 x 17) words in total
vs. 3-6 and 5-8	<b>26</b> words in total
vs. 5-9	<b>17</b> words before atnach
vs. 3-10	<b>51</b> (3 x 17) words in total, with <b>26</b> before atnach
vs. 1-10	<b>34</b> (2 x 17) words before atnach
vs. 6-11 and 12-16	<b>17</b> words after atnach
vs. 9-12 and 15-18	<b>26</b> words in total
vs. 9-13	<b>34</b> (2 x 17) words in total
vs. 11-14 and 13-17	<b>17</b> words before atnach
vs. 15-19 and 16-20	<b>17</b> words before atnach
vs. 20-22	<b>17</b> words in total
vs. 12-22	<b>34</b> (2 x 17) words after atnach
vs. 7-22	<b>104</b> (4 x 26) words in total
vs. 16-23	<b>51</b> (3 x 17) words in total, with <b>26</b> before atnach
vs. 19-24 and 21-25	<b>17</b> words after atnach
vs. 16-25	<b>34</b> (2 x 17) words before atnach
vs. 23-26 and 24-27	<b>26</b> words in total
vs. 19-28	<b>34</b> (2 x 17) words before atnach
vs. 25-29	<b>34</b> (2 x 17) words in total
vs. 27-30 and 33-36	<b>26</b> words in total
vs. 27-31 and 34-38	<b>17</b> words before atnach
vs. 30-32	<b>17</b> words in total
vs. 29-34	<b>17</b> words after atnach
vs. 34-37 and 38-41	<b>26</b> words in total
vs. 28-38	<b>34</b> (2 x 17) words after atnach
vs. 36-39	<b>26</b> words in total
vs. 23-39	<b>52</b> (2 x 26) words after atnach
vs. 38-42	<b>34</b> (2 x 17) words in total
vs. 40-44	<b>34</b> = <b>19</b> + <b>15</b> – relating to the loss of the land
vs. 1-44	<b>153</b> (9 x 17) words before atnach
vs. 42-45b	<b>26</b> words in total, with <b>17</b> before atnach,
vs. 22-45b	<b>78</b> (3 x 26) words before atnach.

9. The name יהוה occurs 5 times (vs. 1a, 3b, 4a, 7a, and 19b); יה only in v. 45c.

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 Dr. C.J. Labuschagne Senior Lecturer in Semitic Languages (retired),  
 Brinkhorst 44 University of Pretoria, South Africa  
 9751 AT Haren (Gron) and  
 The Netherlands Professor of Old Testament (retired),  
[labuschagne.cj@planet.nl](mailto:labuschagne.cj@planet.nl) University of Groningen, The Netherlands